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A NEW DEPARTMENT.

Photographs, postal cards and color reproductions of objects in the permanent collections of the Museum are now on sale at the entrance. This department has met with hearty favor since its formation the last week in October, and will be enlarged as the demand increases. Photographs by Frederick Bemm, the museum photographer, are furnished in a variety of finishes, ranging in price from thirty-five cents to one dollar. Orders are taken for photographs of objects not kept in stock. There are also on sale color reproductions of Art Institute paintings by the Detroit Publishing Company, and autotypes by Braun, Clément and Company, of Paris.

THE GREEK VASES IN THE ART INSTITUTE.

All the Greek vases of the Art Institute collection have been subjected to an elaborate investigation and cleaning, in the course of the past twelvemonth. In the course of this procedure twenty-four of them were found to be wholly or partly repainted by clever restorers, including most of the larger and finer specimens. In thirteen instances an Italian restorer of extraordinary dexterity, very probably the late Francesco Raimondo of Capua, had covered the entire ancient vase with a thin layer of opaque orange stucco, to conceal its injuries, and had repeated the original decoration on this new smooth surface. All this modern revamp we had to remove with infinite patience and caution in every case, before any certainty could be had that original material and authentic ancient designs underlay it.

The natural suspicion that certain vases, the drawing upon which had always betrayed un-antique singularities, might prove to be wholly false, or largely falsified, as to the

composition and details, no less than the execution of their pictured decoration, was happily not verified in a single case. One black-figured lekythos, it is true, had such scanty vestiges of the ancient painting left on its badly corroded surface, after suffering the removal of the modern surcoat and redraft, as to occasion its withdrawal from exhibition. Illustrations of this lekythos and an account of its cleaning will be found in this Bulletin. One inscription, on a black-figured hydria pictured with the struggle of Herakles and Triton, had puzzled Chicago scholars, because it appeared to enrich the Greek language with a new and suspicious proper name. The letters in question were found to be the restorer's repaint of an alien lettered fragment, with which he had stopped a lacuna in this hydria. Without them, the inscription was the common one, *ὁ παῖς καλός*. The same disconcerting method of repair extended to parts of the pictorial and ornamental decoration on this hydria. Elsewhere, on a red figured Apulian krater—now perceived to be Apulian by its rose wash over gray paste, but not before—the modern artist supplies the missing head of an Apollo, whom he did not recognize as such, with a heavy black beard.

More usually no difference which one can so fully describe in words distinguished the original handiwork of the Athenian vase painter from that of his Italian imitator; but the original delineations always excel the modern, visibly, by their fine technical quality and draughtsmanly energy. It is evident, then, how much the dis-restored specimens have gained in manifest authenticity and in real artistic significance, albeit at some cost of their smooth unbroken finish.

A. E.